

Some Highlights of Contemporary Hebrew Dictionaries and Lexicography

This feature highlights the main monolingual dictionaries of Hebrew in Israel today – *Milon Ariel* (Maya Fruchtmann), *Milon Even-Shoshan* (Moshe Azar), *Milon ha-Hoveh* (Mordechai Mishor), *Milon Sapir* (Yitzhak Shlesinger), *Rav-Milim* (Yaacov Choueka) and its online version (Yoni Ne'eman, Rachel Finkel) – with an overall cross-review (Ora R. Schwarzwald), as well as the **Historical Dictionary of the Hebrew Language of the Academy of the Hebrew Language** along with a glossary and notes (Doron Rubinstein).

The roots of Hebrew lexicography are traced to **Rav Saadia Gaon**, who worked mostly in Babylonia in the early 10th century CE. His *Egron* (902 CE) contained nearly 1,000 Hebrew entries, and *Kitab al-sab'in lafZa al-Mufrada* had 70 (actually 90) entries translated into Arabic. In addition, he was the first to write an Arabic translation of the Bible.

The initiative for this focus has been generated by what is considered to be the first major monolingual Hebrew dictionary, the *Mahberet* by **Menahem ben-Saruq**, which appeared in Spain around 950 CE.

Issue Number 13, July 2005, will feature an article on the *Mahberet* by Aharon Maman, articles on modern Hebrew/Arabic dictionaries, and highlights of Arabic dictionaries and lexicography.



Modern Hebrew Dictionaries

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The past decade has seen the appearance of a great number of monolingual modern Hebrew dictionaries, each with a different linguistic approach and editorial aims.

Besides these, there are dictionaries of proverbs and idioms (e.g. *Lashon Rishon* [First Tongue], 2000; *Nivon Ariel* [Ariel Dictionary of Idioms], 2001), clichés (*Medabrim bi-Klisha'ot* [Talking in Clichés], 2002), a thesaurus (*Mila be-Mila* [Word in/by Word], 2000), rhymes (*Haruzim le-Khol 'Et* [Rhymes for all Times], 2001), loan words (*Leksikon Lo'azi-Ivri* [Foreign-Hebrew Lexicon], 2000), lost words (*Milon ha-Milim ha-'Ovdot* [Dictionary of Lost Words], 1996), slang (*Sleng Tsva'i* [Military Slang], 1994; *Leksikon Shotrim ve-Ganavim* [Cops and Robbers Lexicon], 1997; *Sleng ve-Humor* [Slang and Humor], 2003) and professional dictionaries, all published within the past ten years.

The following nine dictionaries will be the focus of our discussion, listed here chronologically with their abbreviations – first the five general dictionaries, followed by the four junior ones.

General Dictionaries

- *Milon ha-Hoveh* [Dictionary of Contemporary Hebrew, literally: Dictionary of the Present/Participle] by

Shoshana Bahat and Mordechai Moshor. Jerusalem: Maariv and Eitav, 1995. 815 pages; henceforth *H*.

- *Rav-Milim* [A Comprehensive Dictionary of Modern Hebrew, literally: Master-Words] by Yaacov Choueka and the Rav-Milim team. Tel Aviv: C.E.T, Miskal and Steimatzy, 1997. 6 volumes, 16+1955 pages; CD-ROM for Windows 98; online: <http://www.ravmilim.co.il>; *RM*.

- *Milon Sapir ha-Merukaz* [The Concise Sapphire Dictionary] by Eitan Avneyon. Tel Aviv: Hed Artzi and Eitav, 1997. 1126 pages; also CD-ROM; *SM*.

- *Milon Sapir* [Encyclopedic Sapphire Dictionary] by Eitan Avneyon. Tel Aviv: Hed Artzi and Eitav, 1998. 7 volumes, 2926 pages; 3 volumes, 2002; *S*.

- *Milon Even-Shoshan Mehudash u-Me'udkan li-Shnot ha-'Alpayim* [Even Shoshan's Dictionary – Renewed and Updated for the 2000s], edited by Moshe Azar and a team. Tel Aviv: Am Oved, Kineret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir and Yediot Aharonot, 2003. 6 volumes, 2200 pages; *ES*.

Junior Dictionaries

- *Rav-Milim ha-Tsa'ir* [Young Rav-Milim: An Annotated and Illustrated Dictionary of Contemporary Hebrew for the Young] by Yaacov Choueka and the Rav-Milim team.